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CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 Sul 1.
2 (a)
3 (b)
4 -(c)

A method for sharing knowledge comprising the steps of:

- receiving information input into a database;
- (b) organizing items of information in the database;
- _(c) collecting ratings and comments associated with each item of information;
 and
 - (d) allowing users to access and sort items of information according to selected rating criteria in order to find the most reliable and/or valuable information from the database.
 - 2. The method of claim 1 which includes the step of (e) adding content, multi-criteria ratings and comment data to the database.
 - 3. The method of claim 2 which includes the step of (f) calculating and displaying rating scores for each item of information.
 - 4. The method of claim 1 which includes the step of (g) allowing users to locate and access selected content in a graphic display format.

The method of claim 1 wherein the organizing step (b) further comprises the step of:

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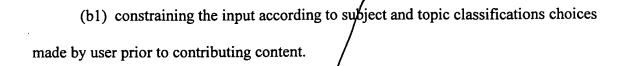
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- 6. The method of claim 4 wherein the graphic display format provides graphic symbols for representing the aggregate rating scores for each criteria and for representing the level of comment support for the content submission.
- 7. The method of claim 6 where a color of the subject descriptions corresponding to information items provides visual indicators of overall rating scores of an information item.
- 8. The method of claim 4 wherein the graphic display format provides a side-by-side display of comments supporting or disputing the content submission allowing individuals to make informed decisions and choices of what to believe or what methods to use to accomplish a particular goal.
- 9. The method of claim 4 wherein the graphic display format provides a display of other comments providing additional information, links or opinions on the content submission.
- 10. The method of claim 2 which includes the step of (h) tracking and controlling the rating process, to prevent a user from voting more than once on a particular item.
- 11. The method of claim 6 which includes the step of (i) displaying the result of an aggregate group rating.

- 1 12. The method of claim 11 which includes the step of (j) displaying the level of support
 2 for an item of information as calculated from the ratio of positive to negative comments
 3 submitted for an item.
- 1 13. The method of claim 12 which includes the step of (k) allowing users to sort within a topic according to personally selected rating criteria, thereby causing the most useful content to rise to the top of the sorted list.
- 1 14. The method of claim 13 wherein the rating criteria comprises weighted combinations 2 of rating criteria.
 - 15. The method of claim 14 wherein the user is asked to select personal preferences indicating the importance of each rating criteria to them.
 - 16. The method of claim 15 which includes the step of (I) allowing users to rate contributors.
- 17. The method of claim 15 which includes the step of (l) allowing users to communicate with contributors by automatic communication links.
- 18. The method of claim 1 which includes the step of (m) allowing users to search on a given subject or within an information item by entering key words.

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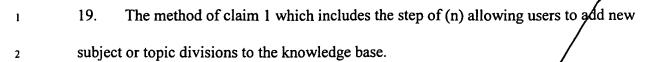
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- 20. The method of claim 4 wherein the graphic display format provides a knowledge base map that is automatically generated as topics and sub-topics are added to the knowledge base.
 - 21. The method of claim 1 in which ratings associated with individual contributors are tracked, allowing content submissions to be sorted by source or contributor ranking.
 - 22. The method of claim 1 in which content submissions are displayed under a topic in order of submission date, allowing new submissions to be exposed to the group for initial ratings and comment feedback.
 - 23. An interface for providing information concerning a subject comprising:

 a first area that shows the subject and contributor name;

 a second area that shows the content of the information item;

 a third area that shows ratings related to the subject; and

 a fourth area that allows users to submit ratings for the information item.
 - 24. The interface of claim 23 wherein a graphic display format provides graphic symbols for representing the aggregate rating scores for each criteria and for representing the level of comment support for the content submission.

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- 25. The interface of claim 23 wherein a graphic display format provides a pavigation area indicating where the posting is located within the data base structure.
- The interface of claim 23 wherein a graphic display format provides access to the text of comments regarding the information item as submitted by other users.
 - 27. The interface of claim 23 wherein a graphic display format provides a side-by-side display of comments supporting or disputing the content submission allowing individuals to make informed decisions and choices of what to believe or what methods to use to accomplish a particular goal.
 - 28. The interface of claim 23 wherein a graphic display format provides a display of other comments providing additional information, links or opinions on the content submission.

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